

# THE WINTER

Saturday, April 29, 1871.



"A living picture presented itself to his view"—p. 467.

## TRIED.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "A STORY OF VIONVILLE."

### CHAPTER X.

ROBERT CLIVE was a striking instance of that phenomenon, which is occasionally to be found among the varieties of human nature, where a whole life, with all its powers and responsibilities, is abso-

lutely sacrificed to one master passion, whose results, if gratified, could not exist one instant beyond it. He had made himself the slave of an inordinate ambition, from the first dawn of his intellect to the hour

when we find him on his death-bed, still as unreservedly given up to its power as in the bright days of his hopeful youth. He had considerable poetic talent, which his vanity rated far beyond its real value; and to the one absorbing desire of earthly fame as a poet he devoted his entire being, to the exclusion of all natural claims and duties, and with so complete a concentration of his mind on this single object, that he lived and acted exactly as if the brief life on earth were the certain termination of existence for man; although, if he had been asked the question, he would have declared that he believed implicitly in a future state, and in the immortal hopes of the Christian faith.

Clive's father had been a country clergyman—a simple, kindly man of very small means—whose income, derived from his living, died with him, and he had, therefore, very little indeed to bestow on Robert, who was his only child. He did his best, however, to give his son a good education, and trusted to his choosing some lucrative profession, which would afford him the means of living when his father should have passed away, and his home be broken up. But Robert scorned the very idea of occupying himself with anything but the cultivation of his poetic gift, which he never doubted would not only crown his desires by rendering him illustrious, but secure him also the advantages of abundant wealth. He quite succeeded in making his indulgent mother adopt his views in this respect, and if his kind and somewhat weak-minded father was less sanguine, at least he would not thwart his only child; and so it came to pass that when Robert had finished keeping his terms at college, of which his parents had with difficulty borne the expense, he persuaded his father to give him all the money he could have left him at his death, that he might use it in travelling abroad, and by that means acquire the new ideas and the knowledge of other countries which he considered essential to his success as a poet.

It was with the greatest reluctance that old Mr. Clive acceded to his son's reckless proposal, for he could not but see the folly of such a proceeding, and he warned Robert again and again, that if he did not succeed in making a fortune for himself by the time this money was all spent, he would be absolutely penniless. While the clergyman himself lived there would be, of course, a home for his son, but it would pass into other hands the day he was buried, and the exceedingly small provision he had been able to make for Mrs. Clive would be barely sufficient to support her, with certainly no margin for the maintenance of the young man, who should rather have assisted her.

To all this Robert calmly replied that if his father wished to prevent his making an ample fortune, he could take no better way than by refusing, at that critical period of his youth, to supply him with the

means of cultivating the talents which would, he was certain, bring to him all the fairest gifts of life, if only justice were done to them.

"I suppose you would have me bury myself in a country curacy, or a merchant's office," he would add fiercely; "where the divine fire that burns within me would be stifled in the dust and ashes of a mean and sordid life. I tell you I would rather die—yes! die in the days of my youth's best promise—and leave to the world a last song which should tell how one whom the gods inspired had his genius strangled by the hands of those who gave him life."

Speeches of this description completely overcame the poor mother, and she joined her entreaties to her son's, till it ended in the old man, with many misgivings, making over to Robert every penny of the sum he had with no small difficulty set aside as his future provision.

Thus imburdened, Robert left his quiet old home at once, and went to Italy, where he revelled in all the fascinations of that bright poetic land; drinking in, as he declared, new inspirations every day, among her paintings and sculpture, and delighting his very soul in the music which seemed everywhere to fill the air, as he wandered among her song-loving children; but he made no attempt, at that period, to commence any work himself, which would build up either his fortunes or his fame. Artistic enjoyment was his sole aim for the time being, and he had it to his heart's content.

Robert was on the point of leaving Italy for Greece, when he received the news of his father's sudden death; and his poor widowed mother would have been only too glad if she could have taken refuge from her desolation in his arms. But a man whose whole soul is centred in a mere personal ambition, becomes of necessity thoroughly selfish in all the relations of life, and it never occurred to him to give up his own pleasures for her consolation. There were no matters of business to be attended to in England, as he had already received all that his father could have bequeathed to him, so he contented himself with writing kindly to his mother, taking care to beg that she would remove everything which belonged to himself in safety to the little cottage, where she was to live on her small annuity, and then he went on to the sunny shores of that classic land which more than any other attracted his poetic fancy.

It was winter in Northern climates, but in beautiful Greece the winters are but a succession of bright days, with clear starlight nights; and after visiting many of the celebrated spots to which the associations of his classical education gave so vivid an interest, Clive settled down at Athens, with the intention of remaining there till the great heat which prevails during the Eastern summer should render it necessary for him to go elsewhere.

"By Callirhoe's fountain lone  
I've seen the stars wake one by one."

These were the first lines of a little poem, which Clive had begun one morning in praise of a lovely spot near Athens which particularly attracted him, and he went back the next evening at sunset to renew his inspiration in the scene itself. This fountain, whose name comes down to us through the long ages that have elapsed since the days of Hellenic glory, is situated in a solitary place outside the town, close to a rocky path which leads to the public cemetery, and not far from the great Temple of Jupiter Olympus, one of the most glorious monuments of the past which remains to us on earth. Clive had descended from the terrace-ground on which these wonderful pillars stand, and had reached the point on the road to the burial-place where the fountain of Callirhoe comes in sight, when suddenly a living picture presented itself to his view, which so transfixed him with admiration that he remained motionless where he stood, gazing upon it with enraptured eyes. The sun was just setting, with the sudden quenching of his fiery brightness which is so characteristic of Eastern climes, and the after-glow was bathing hill and plain in that exquisite indescribable rose tint, of which the old poets sung three thousand years ago, when, in the very midst of the delicate radiance, he saw a young girl standing by the fountain with her beautiful face turned towards the departing sun. Beautiful indeed! Clive, in his wildest dreams, had never seen anything to equal her. It seemed to him as if one of the matchless old Greek statues had been suddenly invested with life and colouring; and it is true that even at the present day the perfect type of classic beauty, as the old sculptors understood it, is to be found among the young Greek maidens whose graceful forms flit through the streets of the renovated Athens. The radiant vision appeared to be almost gleaming with light, for the last sunbeams touched as with fire the gold embroidery on her scarlet cap and jacket, and the threads of the same costly material which were skilfully woven in with the flowing locks of her long fair hair, while her great bright eyes looked without flinching on the dazzling splendour in which the day was dying.

A little way behind her, and evidently in attendance upon her, was an Athenian woman of middle age, whose dark face and sombre attire formed a striking contrast to the brilliant figure of her young mistress.

Clive remained gazing intently on the fair sight, while it stamped itself on his memory with an impression never to be effaced; but as the last ray of light sank below the horizon, and the swift darkness stole over the plain and folded the fountain and all surrounding it in shadow, the lovely picture seemed to melt away before his eyes; for the young girl withdrew her gaze from the now sombre sky, and springing lightly down from the rock where she stood, took her way along the path that led to the town, followed at a respectful distance by her servant.

Clive stood aside to let her pass, scanning as he did so every line of her face, which seemed only more perfect on a nearer view, and then he quietly tracked her steps at a little distance, till he saw her enter a house situated near the Arch of Hadrian, the position of which he carefully noted.

From that moment he never rested till he discovered who inhabited this house, and by what name his beautiful vision was known to the world. He had no difficulty in effecting this. Clive lived in very good style in Athens, on the money his poor father had so laboriously amassed for his benefit, and being a thorough gentleman in manners and appearance, he had easily made his way into the best society in the place. One of the *attachés* of the English embassy had become very intimate with him, and from him he obtained the information he desired the very next day.

"The house with the large balcony near Hadrian's Arch?" said this young man, in answer to Clive's inquiry. "Of course I know it; it contains the most beautiful girl in Athens—Chione Mourousi. If she is the lady you have seen, I do not wonder at your admiration."

"Who is she?" asked Robert.

"The daughter of one of the Phanariote Greeks, by which name I mean the Greeks who lived formerly at Constantinople in the quarter called the Phanar, and were all of the most aristocratic families. Her father met with a little misfortune, to which Greeks in Turkey were subject before the War of Independence. He fell under the displeasure of old Sultan Mahmoud for some political offence, and was invited one day to pay his respects to the Grand Vizier. He did so, and was received with all the honours due to his rank; but he was never seen to come out from that mysterious audience, and the same evening a sack found its way into the Bosphorus, which contained the body of a man on whom the bowstring had done its work. The widow dared ask no questions; her only child, Chione, was born after the event, and as soon as it was possible she removed to Athens. Of course every one visits them because they are of high family, but they are miserably poor, their property in Constantinople having been confiscated by the Turkish Government, and I believe Madame Mourousi fixes all her hopes on her daughter finding a rich husband."

"You are acquainted with them yourself, I suppose?"

"Oh yes, I know them well. I will introduce you to them if you like."

"It is precisely what I wish," said Clive. And he did go that same evening with his friend, and sat on the balcony with Chione and her mother, doing his very best to make a favourable impression upon them. In this he was quite successful, for the widow looked upon him as one of those *Milors Anglais* whom she believed to be all fabulously rich, and

Chione was attracted by the handsome face and flowery language of the young poet.

Clive repeated his visit next day, and many days following, casting all prudent considerations to the winds, according to his usual custom, in his selfish determination to gratify the ruling fancy of the moment.

At that time—though it is to be feared hardly so much now—Englishmen had a great reputation in the East for straightforwardness and honourable dealing, and Madame Mourousi never doubted, when at last Clive asked her to give him her beautiful daughter, that he possessed a secure and ample fortune, which would enable him to maintain her in comfort all her life. Thus believing, she allowed their marriage to take place without further inquiries, making but one condition, which was that Xanthi, Chione's nurse, who was entirely devoted to her, should remain permanently in her service, and go with her wherever she went. And so it was that, before the myrtles and rose-oleanders round the fountain of Callirhoe had faded in the summer heat, Clive had taken his young bride away, to wander with him through the glowing Eastern lands, where he still hoped to find themes for the intended poems, which he was too careless and idle to put into any serviceable shape.

A year later he brought Chione back to Athens for the birth of her child; but here most sad news awaited her, for she found that her mother, of whom she had received no tidings for some time, had died very suddenly a few weeks before their arrival. The shock was too much at such a time, and the young mother only lived to smile once on the fair little daughter, into whom she seemed to have breathed her very life, before she passed away to a land more bright and cloudless even than her own sunlit Greece. Chione's last act was to make Xanthi promise solemnly never to forsake her child, for one year's experience had been quite enough to show her that her husband was too selfishly absorbed in his own ambitious dreams to be a safe guardian of his daughter's happiness.

Clive laid his beautiful Chione to rest, very near the spot where he had first seen her, and then sailed at once for England with his child and her nurse, having the intention of asking his mother to undertake the care of the little Irene for at least some years to come, as it did not at all suit his tastes or his plans to be burdened with a motherless infant.

Mrs. Clive's straitened means made it not altogether an easy task for her, but her heart clung to the lovely little child, and she determined, at the cost of any amount of self-denial, to give her a home, while she herself lived, along with the faithful Greek woman, who absolutely refused to leave her.

So for sixteen years Irene led a peaceful, blessed life under her grandmother's roof, carefully trained in all that was pure and holy, and growing up sweet and guileless, and more strikingly lovely even than her mother had been.

At the end of that period her safe-sheltered ex-

istence came to an end, in consequence of Mrs. Clive's death, and was exchanged for a life of wandering, anxiety, and cruel privation under her father's care. There was no other home for her anywhere else in the world, otherwise Clive would never have associated his delicately-nurtured daughter with his own precarious fortunes. His father's money had all been spent long before, and neither the fame nor the wealth he still confidently anticipated had come to crown his genius with what he held to be its due reward. To a certain extent this was his own fault; greatly as he overrated his powers, he had sufficient literary talent to have enabled him to gain at least a modest livelihood, if he had possessed the application and diligence always necessary for the accomplishment of any real work, of whatever description it may be; but Clive looked upon it as an unendurable hardship for a gifted individual like himself to be obliged to take trouble about anything, and it was only by fits and starts, when driven to it by actual want, that he applied himself to such efforts as would enable him to earn enough for his support. He obviated this necessity as much as he could by visiting old college friends, and prolonging his stay in their houses till they were heartily weary of him; but these had gradually dropped his acquaintance as he sank lower and lower in the world, and by the time Irene came to him, he could scarcely make an appearance as a gentleman at all.

With the increased expenses which the presence of Irene and Xanthi in his wretched lodgings involved, he saw that it was actual starvation which was staring them all in the face, and he did then make a real and prolonged effort to produce what he called a great poem, which he believed was now entirely to redeem his fortunes, and place him on the pinnacle of honour and wealth to which he had so long aspired. During the months which elapsed while he was writing it, they lived chiefly by the sale of their few possessions, and when at last it was completed and a publisher had been found, not without great difficulty, to undertake the risk of bringing it out, Clive's health suddenly failed, and a slow fever began to consume him, the result, in great measure, of want, anxiety, and the sickness of hope deferred; for at the point where we find him on that dim, sad evening, not a ray of comfort had reached him respecting the poem with whose success his very life seemed bound up, and any one less blindly self-confident than he was, would have understood the truth, of which the publisher vainly strove to convince him, that it had been in fact a complete failure, and had fallen dead from the press.

#### CHAPTER XI.

IRENE CLIVE stood on the threshold of her father's miserable home, after she had left him, as we have described, and looked out, with a shudder which she

could not repress, into the cold, dark streets, where the shadows of night were falling rapidly.

The errand on which she was bound was both physically and morally a severe trial to the delicate, sensitive girl. In the peaceful cottage home, where all her life had been passed until the commencement of this last sad year, she had been guarded with a care and tenderness which peculiarly unfitted her for her present unprotected and difficult position. Her grandmother had done her best to keep her from the knowledge even of evil of any kind, guarding every step she took, and never allowing her the least independence of action, so that a quite young child could not have been more guileless and innocent than she was, or more entirely without knowledge of the world. She had the sweetest disposition possible—gentle, loving, and singularly trusting. She believed every one she met to be perfectly good, till some painful experience undeeceived her, and even after some revelation of wickedness she had never dreamt of, she was quite ready the next moment to be just as confiding as before. Her birds and flowers, and her music, for which she had a remarkable talent, had been the greatest interests and occupations of her life before she came to her father, and the rough experiences to which she had been subjected since then had simply bewildered and saddened her, without making her at all more fit to cope with the trials of her position. She had none of the strength of mind or the comprehensive intellect which would have made May Bathurst rise equal to the difficulties of the most rugged path, and she could only weep and tremble and obey her father implicitly, in a mournful surprise at finding life so much more terrible and mysterious, than it had ever been described to her in any book she had read.

Irene stood, therefore, shuddering on the doorstep; for she dreaded, unspeakably, to find herself alone in the dark streets, and to have to walk through the crowds of rough men and women who thronged them at that hour. It is true that she had never been spoken to or molested by any one on former occasions, for her perfectly modest and quiet appearance, joined to the care she took, according to her father's orders, to hide her lovely face under a thick veil, had always enabled her to pass unnoticed; but still to her, who at this hour even in summer had never been beyond the cottage-garden, it was a terrible expedition; and in another way she dreaded almost as much her visit to the publisher. Her last interview with him had been very painful; he was too true a gentleman to have spoken with anything like real unkindness to the gentle girl, whose misfortune it was to be the daughter of Robert Clive, but he had felt bound to tell her, in very plain terms, that her father had deceived him by saying that he would share in the expenses of publishing his book, as he found to his cost, now that it had proved a total failure, Clive had not only no means of relieving the publisher of

any part of the loss, but kept continually harassing him by demands for a portion of the profits, which had never existed and never would exist.

Clive had not intended to act dishonourably, but in his enormous vanity and self-confidence he was so convinced the book was to make his fortune, that he never doubted he would be able to cover much heavier expenses than its publication would involve.

Irene had honestly repeated to her father what Mr. Reames had said, though softening it as much as she could; but the only result had been to excite him to violent anger at the bare idea that his grand poem had been unsuccessful, and he gave a scornful assurance to Irene, that she must have quite misunderstood the publisher's words.

She knew but too well that this was not the case, and, under the circumstances, her delicate pride utterly revolted at the thought of going again to ask money from Mr. Reames; but there was no way of escape. She must obey her father; it was the only duty that stood out plain before her amid all the sad perplexity that had fallen upon her existence. So with a heavy sigh Irene drew her cloak still closer round her, and went out into the gathering darkness, where she passed swiftly through the most unfrequented streets, shrinking aside whenever any one came near her.

She reached her destination unmolested, and going timidly into the office where, at that late hour, only a clerk remained, busily engaged in writing, she asked if she could see Mr. Reames.

"I believe he is still in his room, but he does not receive any one after business hours."

"Perhaps he would be so kind as to let me see him," faltered Irene, "if you would tell him that my father, Mr. Clive, is very ill, and particularly wished me to speak to him."

The clerk elevated his eyebrows at the name of Clive, as if he thought it was about the last likely to convey any pleasant impression to his employer. He hesitated for a moment, then pushing a sheet of paper towards Irene, he said, "I beg your pardon, but it is quite against rule to intrude on Mr. Reames after business hours. If, however, you will write what you have to say, I will pass it into the letter-box in his door, and if you tell him you are waiting an answer, perhaps he will send one."

Irene had no alternative but to comply. With a trembling hand, she wrote a few lines to say that her father was very ill, and in great pecuniary difficulties, and if any sum, however small, were due to him for his poem, he would be thankful if he might have it at once.

With this missive the clerk departed, but he had not long returned to his seat, telling Irene he had left her note in the letter-box, when a little hand-bell was sharply rung in the room within. He went out at once, and came back with a paper hastily folded, which he gave to Irene. It contained simply a few

lines, in the publisher's bold, legible handwriting, to say that no money whatever was or could be due to Mr. Clive. If there ever had been any it would have been intimated to him at once, and he therefore requested that Mr. Clive would henceforth spare himself the pain of these perfectly useless applications.

Mr. Reames could have made no other answer, but he did not know who the unfortunate author's messenger was; and it was well for him, kind-hearted as he was, that he did not see the piteous look of misery that stole over Irene's sweet pale face, and the tears that gathered in her beautiful eyes. She said nothing, however, and bending her graceful head with a quiet dignity towards the clerk, who was watching her intently, she went out once more into the streets, which were colder and darker than ever, even as her own sad heart was heavier and more hopeless.

She walked on quickly till she was quite out of sight of the publisher's office, and then stopped for a moment in a quiet corner to ask herself what she was to do next.

"I cannot—cannot go back to him without a single shilling," she thought, clasping her little hands tightly together in her pain; "he is so faint, so parched: he must have wine. Oh, what if he were to die, as he said, in his exhaustion!" The bare idea was intolerable to her; she stood in deep thought for a few minutes, then suddenly put her hand inside her little red jacket, and drew from her breast a treasure which she had worn there ever since she could remember anything. It was a little representation wrought in silver of the head of Christ, thorn-crowned, of the kind called an *Icon* in the

Eastern Church, and it had belonged to the young mother she had never seen, who, as Xanthi had often told her, had held it in her hand when she was dying. Irene had parted with every little treasure she possessed to procure necessaries for her father, excepting this one last relic of the dead, and she had always told Xanthi she would endure anything rather than dispose of it; but in this sad hour she could no longer hesitate to sacrifice even her last most sacred possession, and she determined at once to go and sell it; but many a tear dropped on the quaint old picture as her reluctant feet bore her to the shop of a small jeweller, where she had already left the few trinkets bequeathed to her by her grandmother.

The little *Icon* was very ancient, and would have had on that account considerable value in the eyes of a connoisseur, but of course the jeweller could only estimate it by the weight of the silver, and she saw with dismay that the sum he gave her would only supply her father with wine, and Xanthi and herself with bread, for a day or two at the most. "And how am I to tell him that his beautiful poem is quite a failure?" thought the poor child, as she crept slowly homewards after having bought what she required; "that is the worst of all. It will break his heart! At least—at least, I cannot tell him to-night; and he must never know I have sold his dear wife's *Icon*. Poor sweet mother! I think she is very happy lying in her painless sleep beneath the beautiful sky of Greece!"

And so already for this young girl, in the fair spring-time of her life, death wore the aspect he assumes for the world-weary and the heavy-laden, and seemed to her a very angel, of pity and of peace.

(To be continued.)

### THE CHILDREN'S GOOD NIGHT.



HE portrait of my darling,  
More beautiful than all  
The children God has left me,  
Hangs on my study wall:

Hangs, where I always see him,  
As I bend above my books,  
Seeming still to smile upon me  
With his strange and winsome looks.

In the open drawer beside me  
I keep his broken toys,  
And one bright curl—'tis all I have  
Of what was once my boy's.

And, through my tears, that portrait  
Still smiling down I see;  
And, oh! I try so hard to feel  
My child is still with me.

And then my other darlings,  
With faces beaming bright,  
And boisterous shouts of merriment,  
Troop in to say, 'Good night.'

And one whose claim is foremost,  
A tiny girl of three,  
Pouts her red lips, to gain the kiss,  
And climbs upon my knee.

And she, too, sees that portrait  
Shine in its mellowed light,  
And to her angel-brother  
She ever bids good night.

And, as she leaves my study,  
She still cries, "Brother, dear—  
Good night, dear little brother!"  
She feels that he is near.

It is a holy lesson  
That infant teaches me;  
Believing, though not seeing,  
How truly blest is she!

No thought of separation  
Her little mind has crossed;  
She speaks to him as present—  
Dare I believe him lost?

She never thinks, as I do,  
Of his grave beneath the sod;  
She never speaks of him as dead—  
Only as "gone to God."

Grand truth of revelation,  
All worldly lore above—  
We must be as little children  
Ere we can believe or love.

CHARLES MAURICE DAVIES, D.D.

### A WORD UPON BEING OUT OF TUNE.

BY THE REV. W. M. STATHAM.

**R**EMEMBER the old days of some twenty years ago, when the home-musical evenings were looked forward to with pleasant expectation—concertina, harp, piano, violin—we all went at it together, the latter taken under my own inefficient control. Oh, that precious violin! what misery it inflicted on the nerves of listeners during my musical pupilage—notably the old shoemaker, who used to live in a cottage close by the garden summer-house, where the practising hours were spent—how it must have worried him! But in the evening, when it chimed in with the other instruments, the fiddle wasn't amiss—that is, it wasn't so much amiss. But the worst of an amateur's violin, as those readers will know who are in the occasional habit of using one, is that it so often gets "out of tune." "There's William again! William, you're out of tune." Yes, that is how I bore the weight of all my own blunders and the occasional lapses of the others—that precious old violin was the scape-goat for all the mistakes of the rest—at least so I thought. However, now that its notes are silent, and, like an old Greenwich pensioner, it has actually done nothing but stump about from one room to another in a disabled condition for many years, yet it has set me thinking, so that now, though it isn't even tuned "to please a peasant's ear," it exists to point a moral, if not to adorn a tale.

Well, I must confess to the truthfulness of the complaint—it *was* occasionally out of tune, wherein it was not unlike its owner, and like all the rest of us, for, apart from the difficulty of keeping up the concert pitch in all one's good resolutions and endeavours, we are all more or less alive to the difficulty of keeping in tune, and yet there is nothing so necessary to our own happiness and to the happiness of others as that we should keep at all events in pretty good tune, and that as events happen in the daily routine of life they should not make discord on the loose strings of an ill-ordered temper. The same sweep of a bow over a well-tuned and an ill-tuned fiddle makes a most amazing difference, and

the contact of the same daily cares and duties with differently ordered natures results in pettishness and discord, or in the music of active industry and peaceful progress.

It is all very well, you say, but how are we to keep in tune? Sentiment is exceedingly pretty in its way, but daily life is a hard, toilsome, fretting, chafing sort of business, and you ought to know that. Exactly; so I do. But I must be allowed to remark that, apart from the performer's skill, even violins differ in original constitution. Some are awkward to hold, difficult to finger, and produce little more music than if you had strung a boot-jack, and of course there are degrees of difference up to the very best which a Sainton or an Ernst or a Joachim ever swept; and so it most unquestionably is with different types of human nature. But this remains true—violins good, bad, and indifferent can all be "kept in tune," and so can all natures if the right methods are adopted for securing so excellent an end.

I need scarcely say that to commence and close the day with family prayer is an excellent way of tuning the varied natures that thus kneel together around the throne of the heavenly grace. Wonderful is the mystery of prayer. We cannot understand its mode of operation, but there is nothing else like it in this world. It is so subtle in its operation; it seems to steal away our cares ere we are aware. It opens with a golden key the dull chamber of our hearts, draws up the blinds and lets the light of heaven in. It brings the suppliant child before the Father's face, and makes the old words, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things," a promise real and true to us. And when we are all kneeling down together—parents and children, masters and servants—it ought, and in some degree must have a tendency to regulate the way we speak to each other, and the way we treat each other amid all the duties of the day. My first counsel to a household that wanted to keep well in tune together would be, set up a family altar, and when you have

set it up, keep it up. Do not think that the exercise must needs be a lengthened one. A few verses from the inspired Book, and brief prayer, breathing of human and divine wants, will have a most benign influence on the family life. I have little faith in tunings that do not touch the soul. There must come discord in our daily life if we are not at peace with God, and that is at best but a poor tranquillity which is only the physical composure of healthy nerves.

But when you have realised the necessity of attention to the religious side of life, other influences remain for us, which it is God's will that we should attend to.

A man can scarcely keep in tune who unstrings his nerves by lying late in bed in the morning, or who indulges in absinthe, and other extremely cogent beverages, or who neglects healthy exercise; his tuning-up will not be the bracing of a wholesome system, but the straining of strings which will become attenuated, and at length give way. Only fancy a man taking a violin with worn strings to the maker and saying, "Kindly tune up this instrument." The answer would be, "The strings are pretty well done for, sir." And yet that is exactly what some people expect their doctors to do—viz., to tune them up when their nerve-strings are pretty nearly done for.

The best tuning-up is rest, and it is a matter for gratitude that the worn and jaded nerves can be re-toned. Yes, let us thank God for that—a little sea-side rest, when the energies are directed, not to stone-breaking, but to stone-throwing into the sea; a few days amid the green meadows and the quiet woods—it is wonderful what can be accomplished when rest is taken in time. Certainly also healthy forms of recreation help to re-tune the system. We cannot be always at work: how, for instance, skating makes the blood tingle through the veins, and by its new sensation breaks through the routine of life; how books lead us into the fairyland of history, science, and song! "Yes," says a reader, "what with reviews and magazines, the good old folio volumes are not read now-a-days." Were they ever read, my friend—these same old folios—on any very extensive scale? Did not our great-grandfathers have those "magnifique" glass-door book-cases in their studies with huge volumes, which made a most portentous appearance, and gathered on them an alarming amount of dust, whilst the books were little likely to be taken down as the family portraits? The fact is that this is a more reading age than any in our own English history; and that what is called contemptuously our "light literature" often drives us to the study of those folio volumes which else we should never open. Yes, books are dear friends, precious to the minds that are jaded with toil and worry.

We open them, and walk amid the stately halls of history, and talk with the generations that are gone. The shoutings of the armies are heard again, and the walls of the forum and the senate ring once more with the eloquence of olden time. The world stops at the gates, and we go through to wander with the spirits of the past!

It must be very unpleasant to have much to do with people who are in a chronic state of "out of tune." "You cross old bear," one is tempted to think to oneself sometimes, "it doesn't matter what people do, it's never right. If they've made tea for you, you want coffee; if they've harnessed the mare, you tell them to saddle the cob instead; if people are civil, you say they are cadging; and if they are cool, you say they are so cunning." Now and then, let us be thankful, only exceptionally, one does meet with a regular "Grumbletonian," and when he happens to be in tune you feel as though it wasn't quite all right with him. There is a vast amount of good temper and kindly feeling, though, in the world, considering everything. Satirists have to deal with exceptions. There is much kindness everywhere, if we have only eyes to see it; and there is much music all about us, especially in home-life, and there would be more of it if we all tried to keep well in tune.

How beautiful a sight it is when affliction and pain having come to some poor sufferer, there is a spirit beautifully attuned even when the "silver cords" of the earthly tabernacle, if not quite broken, are altogether unstrung! No murmuring, no repining, but quiet rest in God. Surely this shows us, that when the time of trial comes, religion can make the soul independent even of the healthy body, and that God can produce sweet music even from a broken harp. If we wish to learn how to bear our trials without annoyance, and how to be thankful amid our many mercies, nothing will assist more in tuning our hearts than a visit to those who are restful in the midst of pain, submissive in hours of bitter bereavement, and hopeful in the weightiest grief. I am sure of this, that the sentiment with which men and women come away from such spectacles is this: "Well, I ought indeed to be cheerful and thankful considering how few are my troubles, and how great is the multitude of God's tender mercies."

One word, however, upon the fact that none of us can well help being a little out of tune sometimes, and it is an excellent vocation to be "tuner," not to people's pianos, but to people's hearts. There are some people who have no consideration for the troubles of others. Great overbearing men come home sometimes, and wonder that everything isn't as harmonious as a St. James's Hall concert. Ah! they little know how all the household cares and worries have fretted the heart, how the management of servants and



*(Drawn by LOUISA TAYLOR.)*

“There is a silence in the house,  
A stillness in the dying day”—p. 474.

children, and the general oversight of home, have tired the brain. Instead of complaining that all isn't in perfect tune, let them try to bring home with them bright thoughts and cheery spirit-quickenings words of sympathy and consolation, We all want "tuning" at times; let us, therefore, ever do our little best to "tune up" other hearts.

Some people are never out of tune—at least they never think they are. Oh no, it's somebody else; they are themselves, however, down on B flat all the time, but they don't seem to know it, and it is they who are spoiling the performance: the moral of which is—let us always, as the good old Book says—"look to ourselves," and do not let us fear to take our share of blame in not always being, in a musical sense, so far as our own nature is concerned, quite up to the mark.

Some people there are—God speed that we be like them—who seem to have the excellent genius of making every one happy about them; they do

not set themselves to the work in any given way but they have the "way of it" somehow; they are not flatterers or time-servers, or oily and unctuous in their manner—not at all; but they have unselfish hearts, and instead of "being hurt" that others do not visit them, attend to them, and play pleasant tunes to them, their main thought is how best they can make others around them better and happier.

Seeing, then, the best instruments do get out of tune, and that the music of life cannot well go on till they are in tune, we may take up the advertisement style, and say, "Wanted Tuners! In every town and village in England. Wanted Tuners!" There is certainly a sphere for kind geniuses everywhere who know how to tune.

I cannot close, however, without recurring to the chief thought once more—that to be at peace with ourselves and with all about us, we must, first, be in the enjoyment of peace with God.

#### AT THE WINDOW.



HERE is a silence in the house,  
A stillness in the dying day ;  
Only afar the men carouse,  
After the loading of the hay.  
"O come, my darling," and "come," I cry ;  
"The days are long, the nights are eerie,  
I cannot live and I cannot die,  
While my heart throbs, and is weary!"

#### II.

With curving swoop the swallow flies,  
From eave to earth, from earth to eave ;  
The skylark hangs upon the skies,  
Too full of love and light to grieve.

"O come, my darling," and "come," I call ;  
"The skies are dim and the earth's adreary,  
Or the day shall dawn or the night shall fall,  
Come ! for my soul is weary."

#### III.

And day by day I watch the hill  
Wheredown the village footpath bends ;  
At times my very heart stands still  
To see a meeting of old friends.

"O come, my darling," and "come," I cry ;  
"The days are long and the nights are eerie,  
How can I live, or how can I die,  
While this heart throbs, and is weary?"

#### LETTERS FROM "DARKIE."

BY A NAVAL CHAPLAIN.

**W**HO in the religious world has not often heard of the intelligence of the negro race, both in its native and cultivated condition? Who that reads the reports, or extracts from them, of the great missionary societies, does not know that vast sums of money are annually expended to evangelise, and so Christianise, the heathen, who inhabit the dark places of the earth, and whose dwelling-places are the strongholds of ignorance and idolatry?

Sierra Leone is one of the brightest spots in the whole map of missionary enterprise. There a very large share of the dew of God's blessing has descended and fertilised a soil that was

once notorious for its superstition and cruelty. No one who has been there for any length of time, and has visited the schools, and talked with the natives, and tried to sound their feelings, can deny that a mighty work has been performed there, and that where darkness reigned light is now shining brightly. Can it be doubted that when they go to other parts of their own country, or to foreign lands, they carry with them the effects of their Christian training, and so in many instances become, in a minor degree, missionaries themselves? The work they do in this way among their brethren—ay, and among Europeans too—is almost incalculable. Speaking from experience of those with whom I have

come in contact, I can say, without fear of contradiction, that better Christians in word and deed, as a class, I have never met. It is true many bad ones were amongst them. How could it be otherwise? Would it be fair to expect more from them than from ourselves? Is there not an admixture of good and bad in every rank of society, be it in the gorgeous cities of Europe, the boasted centres of civilisation, in the deserts of Africa, on the arid, sun-scored plains of India, in the backwoods of America, or in the widely-scattered islands of the Pacific? Must not the tares grow together with the wheat until the harvest, when the angel-reapers shall separate them one from the other?

I was for a long time in one station, in one spot, and had committed to my care the spiritual interests of many negroes, all of whom had at one time or another been trained in missionary schools, had imbibed the doctrines of the Christian religion, and who had come far from their native land to serve as Government labourers. Their conduct gave general satisfaction to those in authority over them, and put to the blush that of many who despised them, regarding them and treating them as "mere niggers." Their attendance at Divine service was most regular, and their devotion was intense. As often as opportunity offered, many of them were in the house of God to worship, which certainly could not be said of those who from their infancy had been trained in the religion of their fathers, and who ought to have been an example in every good work to those whom they so lightly esteemed. Their little ones they made attend the day and Sunday schools with punctuality, and many of the parents were not ashamed to be found at the night school which was established for the benefit of all who chose to receive instruction. Their anxiety to be possessed of books was most astonishing. They would lay by every shilling they could save, in order that they might be able to give me an order to get books from England. During my sojourn in this Government establishment I have received from England hundreds of pounds' worth for them. They never grumbled at the price, provided the books were well and handsomely bound. Indeed, many of them looked far more to the binding of the volume than to the matter contained therein, or the style in which it was printed. Illustrations also went a long way to please them in their purchases. This weakness of theirs, if such it may be called, may be accounted for when we remember that the negroes are in their dress extremely fond of the most gaudy colours they can get, and from this same reason we find their rooms often adorned with the most outrageously coloured pictures, in which there is not a particle of taste displayed. Of no work were more copies ordered than of a

book entitled "The Polite Letter Writer." Innumerable copies of it were ordered, not so much for themselves as for their friends far away, to whom they sent them as often as they could. After this, works of a Biblical nature were in most demand. One or two went so far as to supply themselves with rudimentary Latin and Greek books.

It astonished me not a little when I was asked to order them. I very naturally inquired of my sable friends their object in getting such books, and their reply was, "Well, master, we will try to learn these, and so be able to study the Bible as our missionaries tell us it should be studied." What a noble object in view! what a goal to be reached by a poor negro!

What use they made of their "Polite Letter Writer" may be judged by the readers, each one for himself, from the letters which we subjoin. I give them verbatim, as they reached me, and they are a specimen of what a fairly-educated negro can write when necessity arises.

#### SPECIMENS OF LETTERS.

"REVEREND SIR,—With this I write to you as follows wishing to know from you that if those books which we order for arrive please to send it up by the name of those men who order for them.

"I remain yours humble servant

"JOHN W. —."

"REVD SIR,—This are the names of the sponsors for my son  
Claudius Joseph—

Henry Genge.

James Wilson.

Mary Lawson.

Parents' Name,

Joseph —

Sally —

Date of Birth.

13th —, 186 .

Sir, should it be proper that I should be at Church this Thursday coming to return thanks to God for his great deliverance towards me?

"Yours truly member

"SALLY —."

"REVD SIR,—Taking the opportunity of sending this few lines to you that we have heard the Mail arrive last Sunday and those books which you order for us we learnt that the books already come and we wish you to keep your own for us and if our life shall spare we will be down on Saturday.

"Yours truly,

"JOHN W. —."

"YOUR HONOR SIR,—Please if those Companions to the Bible left I want three if you please and if you name me to send the money please to let your servant know and he will write me wishing you are pretty well

"I am Sir

"JAMES E. —."

"REVD SIR,—I have been borne, and bear, and now I am out of patience; I cannot but express the deep sighs that glow in the bottom of my heart when I had to meet my wife this day really drunk or she is now in a state of intoxication. I cannot please her at least I cannot do anything to please her in my residence down the — town. Several times I made my complaint to the elders down the — town, and the only encouragement I can get is, to patience, and now as I have aforesaid said that I am now out of patience. I therefore beg of you in the name of God to acquaint the governor of it if his honor will be gracious to give her caution, lest by this continual traffic I may do mischief which might cause or brought some irreversible inconveniences both to myself, *et cetera, et cetera* (sic).

"This afternoon I was at No. 1 Mess just about 10 minutes after 1 o'clock dinner, after dinner having requested by the Cater of the Mess to give him some tobacco I went in my quarter accompanied by one friend for the tobacco, when I had to wait out door for the space of five minutes before my wife could open the door. Sir I cannot now express all what I have seen orally, this is not the first nor twice, but constant habit—In attending to your petitioner Sir will esteem favour from your humble fellow

"JOHN —."

The following letter I received from an old and faithful African; in it he endeavours to explain that his adopted daughter, who is about to be married, should first have obtained his permission, in accordance with the customs of the country he comes from.

"SIR,—I have take my pen in hand to write you this few lines Hannah she come and meet me this morning she told me that — said that he must come down the town to get marriage. Hannah she is trying to get me into a mess. I did not think that I will drive Hannah away. Hannah is father Less and Mother Less if sorpose any person need of Hannah to get marriage with her He ought to come to me and the mother. She went to the Governor this morning she told him that I drive him away. I hope and trust that before Hannah and — going to get marriage you must see me. I want to see both of them to say something. Sir the country I come from if any person want my daughter he must come to me and the mother. I got any many evidence to prove that when Hannah come to tell me that she is going to get marriage from since I know me Self I been in Service 24 years. I never got to mess as yet. Hannah she is trying to get me into a mess Sir please as to let the Governor know about it

"No more to say yours obedient Servant

"SAMUEL —."

Two months elapsed between the receipt of the following letter and the last. In the interval the mother is treated badly by her newly-married adopted daughter. I was appealed to to use my influence to have her conduct brought under official observation.

"7th —, 186—.  
"DEAR SIR,—Hopen this my letter reaches you quite safe as it leaves me at present. Sir I wonder if you heard anything about the rowl between Mrs. — and Hannah down — town. I seen my wife this Evening at 5 o'clock with a black eye and I ask her what's the matter with her and she told me that Hannah pitching to her on Saturday evening opposite the African Garley of which she has many evidence to prove it. Please your honor Sir do you think it right if I did not take Hannah to myself when she is 10 months old. Father Less and Mother Less, of which I have been suffer with my mistress to support her until she is of age before she gets marry—My Mistress and her Son went over to Hannah's room last Saturday Evening for to look at her Son's Clothes and after she left there she went to Mrs. — opposite the Blacksmith's Shop. She was conversing with her they was just saying something to themselves and Hannah was over in the African Garley She comes over to my mistress in haste, and says what is it. What was that you was just saying then my mistress said to her what I have just spoken then Hannah took hold of my wife by the collar and give her such a knock across the face and She gave her a black eye and thence she Stoop down for a Chopper to hit my mistress and she was obliged to run away for fear She will hurt her. Sir this is not the first time just the same She flog her once when we were in another part of the settlement even the Governor checks her and he promise to sent her away the next time she does like that. Many can know something about her conduct even her own brother can tell you something about her conduct. Will you please your honor Sir Shew this to the Governor and tell him for me Sir and my Mrs. is now so cold she is not able to take her to-night, you know very well about my conduct Sir since I have been here together with her. In Service 24 years, and I never been brought forward before for no crime at all. I am your obedient Servant Sir

"SAMUEL —."

If a perusal of these letters, besides giving a little amusement, has the effect of stirring up any to devote something out of their means wherewith God has blessed them to further missionary labour, and so strengthen the hands and gladden the hearts of our countrymen engaged in the mighty work of spreading abroad the Redeemer's kingdom, my object in giving them publicity will be amply rewarded.

#### A HYMN.

"Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, thou art the guide of my youth?"—Jer. iii. 4.

**G**OD of Mercy, God of Truth,  
Guide me from my early youth;  
Bless me, O my Father, bless;  
Clothe me in Thy righteousness.  
  
Grace and peace do Thou bestow, 1 Peter i. 2.  
Make me all Thy Will to know; Phil. ii. 13.  
Give me power that Will to do,  
A spirit right in me renew. Ps. li. 10.

Gently lead me by the hand,  
Seeking out a better land:  
When Death's valley I shall tread, Ps. xxiii. 4.  
Let me then no evil dread.

Comfort me with staff and rod, Ps. xxiii. 4.  
Thou my Guardian, Thou my God!  
Take me to Thine Home above  
Where Thou dwell'st, the God of Love.

*Paglesham Rectory.*

REV. J. HARRIS.

#### NEL SIE'S ADVENTURE.

**C**ELL, I must say that I think Nelsie Evans is a fortunate little girl—indeed, a very fortunate little girl, and I don't much wonder that you feel just a wee bit envi— No, I didn't mean to say that ugly word, but rather just a wee bit

as if you would like to exchange places with her for a little while; but that's quite impossible, and so, of course, you won't think another thought about it. I dare say you can hardly believe it, but nevertheless it is quite true that I remember quite distinctly the time when I didn't relish learning my lessons any

more than you do, and when I should have thought Nelsie Evans just as much to be envied as you are thinking at this moment. For I must confess that I always did feel particularly lazy in warm weather, and should have been ready to jump over the moon (mind you, I never really tried to do so) with delight, at the idea spending a whole day in the glorious woods.

For that, you know as well as I do, is why you would like to change places with Nelsie Evans, and leave lessons and everything else for the sake of a day amid the delicious fragrance of the wild flowers and the shade of the forest trees.

But we cannot all have the good fortune of our friend Nelsie, and as you have been so good as to overcome all the naughty feelings that tried so hard to get the mastery, I am going to make a little bargain with you, which is that I should put on my magic ring, make myself invisible, follow little Nelsie in her rambles, be back again with you in less than no time (the very shortest time in which ever fairy did her magic deeds), and tell you all the adventures that have befallen our friend.

Now then, I am off; good-bye, all of you. Look out for my return, and expect to hear something very interesting indeed.

\* \* \* \* \*

Well, here I am back again, I am sure you will own that I have kept my word, and been marvellously quick. I haven't much breath left, I can tell you, and you really must let me have a few minutes to myself before I begin. Well, when Nelsie came out of her house holding on to her brother Robert's (that's that great tall brother of hers, you know) hand, she certainly did look very pleasant and very pretty. There now, you're interrupting me before I've well started. "What had she on?" Must you know? Well, then, she wore a white frock with a blue sash, and a white cape, and white hat, and her face—can you guess what she wore on her face? "A veil!" The idea! No, try again. Smiles, of course. She wore a smile on her face, and I thought that was the prettiest thing she had on. Oh! I must not forget to tell you that she had a bag on her arm, which I suspected contained all sorts of nice things, from the way she looked at it and opened it, and was always putting her nose very close to it.

When Nelsie and her brother had gone a little way down the lane that leads from their father's house, they met another little girl, much older than Nelsie, and two very big boys, who, I suppose, were her brothers. They all went on together till they arrived at a house outside of which were waiting two pleasure-vans and several carriages. By-and-by there came trooping down the gravel path such a number of boys and girls of all sizes and ages, and all looking so happy and laughing, that I felt obliged to laugh too to keep them company. When all these were stowed away in the two pleasure-vans, several ladies

and gentlemen came out and got into the carriages, and they all drove off. I had forgotten to tell you that I spied Nelsie getting into the first van, and that after all the children were in, I got up into it also and stood in the middle, although Nelsie never for a moment dreamt that I was there. All the other little children had bags over their arms, at which I rather wondered, having seen hampers of good things stowed away in one of the carriages. I soon found out that we were going a very long way, and that the children had been provided with cake in case they should feel hungry before they arrived at their destination.

After several hours, during which time an astonishing quantity of cake had been consumed, we all arrived safely at a lovely wood. Here we alighted, and the children scampered off in groups, having been warned not to go out of calling distance.

Then there was a great unpacking of hampers, and out came pies of every description, besides all sorts of nice things far too numerous to mention. I didn't stay to see the rest of the unpacking, for I thought of my promise to you, and so off I went after Nelsie and her companions. It was not long before I discovered them, seated on a hillock, decking themselves and their hats with the wild flowers and ferns that grew luxuriously under the bushes and trees.

I should like you to have seen that little piece of the wood. It was so perfectly lovely. The grass, which was sheltered alike from extreme heat or cold by the overarching trees, was of the most delicate green, and so fine and tender that it seemed almost barbarous to tread upon it, and the bright-hued flowers nodded their heads gaily from out their brambly nooks.

The little ones were soon tired of decking themselves, and started off in pursuit of further amusements. Now it was a gorgeous butterfly that attracted their attention, and now it was a tree loaded with apples, which on tasting they found to be sourer than vinegar. So the time passed until they were interrupted by the echoing of their own names through the wood, and back they all trooped to partake of the refreshment that had been laid out for them on the grass.

Great was the merriment when it was discovered that knives and forks had all been forgotten, and that the only thing to be done under the circumstances was to use those more ancient commodities, that had been made before forks, and which now proved to be of the greatest convenience. Then the hamper in which knives and forks had been packed contained also the cups and mugs, and these not being forthcoming, it was found necessary to wash out jam-pots and pie-dishes in the little stream, and pass them round with their contents of lemonade or milk. But who minded these little inconveniences, or who would have thought it half a picnic without them?

But by-and-by the pie-dishes were empty, plates of tarts cleared, and jars which had contained lemonade rolling about on the grass. Then there were games of all sorts, and a grand dancing of Sir Roger de Coverley, but I did not see what came after that, for Nelsie, whose face I had noticed for some time past looking rather cloudy, detached herself from the rest and sauntered away among the trees, hand in hand with a little friend scarcely older than herself. Of course I was bound by my promise to you to follow, and so I unwillingly turned my back on the merry group.

On the children went, scrambling through tangled underwood, and scratching arms and legs with the clinging briars. Suddenly they came upon a poor gipsy woman, who held a young baby in her arms. Seeing only two children, the woman suffered them to pass without attempting to beg, but to my surprise Nelsie went up to the woman, and said, "Here, poor woman, here's some money for you," and at the same time she dropped something into the woman's hand.

"God bless you, my pretty dear!" exclaimed the poor woman. But at this moment she opened her hand, and found that what she had taken to be silver was nothing more than a large white button.

"Ah, you wicked child!" called the woman after Nelsie, who was laughing heartily at the trick; "you'll repent treating a poor hungry soul like this."

I can't tell you how sorry I was to see that Nelsie, who looked so pretty and so nice, could be guilty of such a wanton piece of cruelty; and it was very sadly that I followed her and her friend.

A little further on they met a little child carrying her father's dinner in a basin tied up in a hand-kerchief.

"Please, miss, can you show me the way out of the wood?" asked the little girl; "I've lost my way."

"Go along there," said Nelsie, pointing in a totally different direction from that in which we had come, and which, of course, she could have known nothing about.

"Thank you, miss," said the little girl, dropping a curtsey, as Nelsie ran laughingly away.

Soon they met a poor old man.

"Do look how that old man hobbles along!" exclaimed Nelsie; "I should think that must be the man that wouldn't say his prayers, and that he got lame by being thrown down-stairs."

The old man, hearing Nelsie's remark, shook his crutches at her, and said she was a bad child; but, not having sufficient support with one crutch, the old man suddenly stumbled over a mole-hill, and fell down on the grass.

"Do help me up, for I shall never get up by myself," asked the poor old man; but Nelsie and her friend took no heed, so I went and assisted the poor fellow, who seemed greatly surprised that he could not see anybody near him.

When I overtook my two companions, they were

standing near a clear piece of grass, where a number of ducks and geese were feeding. I noticed that there were a quantity of little ducklings, who could not have been many days old. As soon as Nelsie saw these, she ran at them with all her speed, dispersing the frightened ducks in every direction. The little ducklings ran about, tumbling over each other, and before Nelsie had amused herself sufficiently by their fright, several of the little downy creatures lay on the grass quite dead. When Nelsie saw this she felt very sorry, and walked on quite soberly for some time, picking up, as she went, the horse-chestnuts with which the ground was strewed in many places. A flock of sheep attracted her attention.

"Oh, it's such fun to see the sheep running about in every direction!" laughed Nelsie; "they're such silly frightened creatures;" and as she spoke she began pelting the poor innocent creatures with the chestnuts she had picked up.

By the time her stock was exhausted the sheep were scattered in every direction; and as she ran along, a boy, who was trying to collect them, called after her, "Bad luck to you; shure when'll I iver get 'em together agin?"

Soon after this a little dog ran howling by. He rushed about hither and thither, and it was very plain that he had wandered away from his master and got lost in the wood.

"Here, poor fellow!" cried Nelsie, coaxing the dog towards her.

He ran up to her, wagging his tail, and quite delighted to find a friend; and what do you think Nelsie did? I am quite ashamed to tell you. She tied a great bough covered with apples on to the poor dog's tail, and then ran away, leaving him to run about in that pitiful condition.

"I say, Rosie," exclaimed Nelsie, "just look at the shadows!"

"Well, what of them?" asked Rosie.

"Why," answered Nelsie, "when we first started there were hardly any shadows anywhere, and now look how big we are, and look what shadows the trees make. I do declare there's nothing but shadow."

"Well, let's turn back," suggested Rosie.

"That's just what I was going to do," answered Nelsie. "I wonder how far we've come; I'm afraid we've been a very long time."

So the two children turned round, and started off to find their friends. As Nelsie had said, the shadows were everywhere, and owing to the thickness of the trees and bushes it was beginning to look quite dark, although, in all probability, outside the wood it was still quite light.

We all three plunged in among the trees, and walked on very quickly, when suddenly we came out on to a clear space through which ran a wide stream.

"Do you remember this stream, Rosie?" asked Nelsie. "I'm sure I don't."

I didn't remember the stream at all, and in-

deed I felt sure that we had come quite out of our way.

"We've come wrong," said Nelsie. "I know which way we ought to have come; let's run back to the place we turned round at, and then we shall find the right way. Let's be quick, Rosie, for it's getting dark."

So we ran along to get back to the place where Nelsie had first noticed the shadows, but the worst of it was we didn't get there, for we couldn't find it any more than we could find our way back to our friends; for I must own that I was as bad as the two children, and no more knew the way back than they did. The forest looked so very different, now that the evening shadows had fallen, to what it had done when we had started.

Poor Nelsie began to feel much alarmed. She ran first this way and then that, but came no nearer to the right track.

At length she said to Rosie, "Do run and see if that opening isn't the place where we saw the ducks. I feel sure it is, and yet I fancy it was over that way. I'll run this way and look while you run over there, and I'll meet you again here."

Now this was the worst thing Nelsie could have thought of; and I was just taking a few minutes to consider whether I hadn't better make myself visible and advise her to do nothing of the sort, when sure enough both the children had run off and were nearly out of sight. I followed Nelsie as fast as I could, and, after winding about between the bushes a little while, came up with her. No ducks were to be seen anywhere, and Nelsie turned back in search of Rosie. But though she ran about, backwards and forwards, through the bushes, and called out Rosie's name, no Rosie could be discovered anywhere; and to make bad worse, it was growing quite dark, for although the day had been so warm, the summer was nearly gone.

Poor Nelsie seemed greatly distressed at this new misfortune. She threw herself down on the grass and cried passionately.

At this point I thought it would be only kind to comfort poor Nelsie a little, so I went behind a bush and took off my ring. The next minute I appeared before Nelsie and told her to cheer up, for that if she would not move from where she was I would find Rosie and bring her back, and then we would all three try to find our way out of the wood.

Nelsie promised, and off I started. This time I was successful. Before very long I found Rosie, and seeing a man in the distance, we ran after him and asked him if he could direct us. To my delight, he could, and with this piece of good news I hastened back to Nelsie.

Well, when we found her she told us of the strangest adventure she had had, and this is what it was:—

Soon after we had left her she said that a little girl had come up to her, whom she had recognised as the little girl they had met carrying her father's dinner. "I asked the little girl, continued Nelsie, "if she could show me the way out of the wood. She said she could, and pointed to a way which she said would bring me to a pathway which would take me out of the wood, and then she laughed and ran away. I felt that, although you had told me not to move, I must go and see; so I ran along the way the little girl had told me, and what do you think I found? No path at all, but a heap of stones, which made me fall down and hurt my legs so that I couldn't move. Presently a man came along, and I called out to him, 'Please help me up, for I can't get up by myself,' but the man answered, 'I am lame, and must look after myself.' And then he came and beat me with his crutches till I was bruised all over. Every time I tried to get up he beat me again, and at last he ran away laughing as hard as he could, 'There, little miss, that's in return for the way you served me.' I knew then that it was the lame man I had seen this afternoon.

"As soon as I could," continued Nelsie, "I got up and started off again. I heard a great noise behind me, and when I looked round I saw a flock of sheep running after me. I ran away as fast as I could, but they soon caught up to me, and began pelting me with thousands of horse-chestnuts. I couldn't get out of their way, for the faster I ran the more they pelted me. I was just wondering what I should do, when I saw a number of ducks coming along with their mouths open. 'Do bite those nasty sheep,' I said; but they came up to me and flew at me. I stooped down to pick up a stone, but the ducks fastened themselves on to my fingers, and when I looked down there were five ducks hanging from each of my hands. I couldn't help crying at the pain, and then all the sheep began to laugh, and the ducks cried out, 'Who killed our little ones?' I was so dreadfully frightened I didn't know what to do, and I was wondering if I should ever get rid of the sheep and ducks, when I saw a woman coming towards me. I called out to her to drive the sheep away, but she answered me by pelting me with great hard white buttons that were even worse than the horse-chestnuts. The only thing to be done was to try and run away again. I tried as hard as I could, shaking the ducks off my hands at the same time; but I found that I couldn't move. I was so heavy. I looked behind me to see how it was. There, hanging to my dress, was a great apple-tree, that, tug as I would, I could not move, and running behind me was the little dog that we met this afternoon, laughing with all his might. At this moment I fell down on my back, and knocked my head against the tree. The buttons and horse-chestnuts came pelting into my face, when, whatever do you think? everything faded away just like it does in a magic

lantern, and you were coming along with Rosie just a little way off."

There, that's Nelsie's adventure, and wasn't it a funny one? I know what you think. That Nelsie fell asleep and dreamt it. That's just what I said, but Nelsie wouldn't hear of that, but said that everything she told me really did happen.

"Did we find our way?" Oh yes, and our friends too. They were very much frightened at the children's disappearance, and said it was their own faults for not having been more careful to watch them, and when they had thanked me I felt it was high time to make myself invisible again.

Nelsie told me as she walked along that she had only been having a bit of fun when she played off her tricks, but she had found it wasn't at all funny when the sheep and ducks and all the others had played their tricks upon her, and so she would never again be unkind to anybody or anything, not even a duck.

I was very glad to hear that Nelsie's adventure, as she called it, had made such a good impression on her, for that bad habit of teasing was leading her into all sorts of evil.

You think that it wasn't an adventure at all, but that it was a dream. So do I, but Nelsie won't be convinced.

#### "THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

147. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, is presented to our notice as the prominent character on three occasions. Mention them.

148. Three of the prophets contain no direct Messianic prophecy. Give their names.

149. A reference to the first Messianic prophecy in

the Bible occurs in one of St. Paul's Epistles. Quote the passage.

#### ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 448.

138. Judges xi. 26. "While Israel dwelt in Hesbon. . . . three hundred years."

139. The old man of Ephraim (Judges xix. 20).

140. Gen. xvii. 6. When God appeared to Abram and said, "I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee."

141. Amos vii. 12-14. When Amaziah said to Amos, "Go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread and prophesy," Amos answered and said, "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son."

#### IN MEMORIAM DEAN ALFORD.

 T is not that that thy name is written high  
In titles of the Church, or that thy zeal  
Was spent in brandishing the temper'd  
steel

Of controversy, that thou shalt not die

For these may pass, and leave the world still dark;  
But incense of a life instinct with love  
Shall rise from blessing earth to heaven above,

Whence came of old the vivifying spark.

Such was thy life, not splend'rous but benign,

By charity large-hearted making known

Religion is not of the creed alone,

But first of love, which made it thus Divine;

O for more souls like thine to teach the good,

And spread afar the perfect love of God!

GEORGE SMITH.

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE "QUIVER COT FUND."—ELEVENTH LIST.

*Being amounts received to 22nd February, 1871.*

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*(A Statement of the Fund and its application will shortly be laid before our readers.—ED. Q.)*